

NHS Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Formulary Service



This pharmacy provides the NHS Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Formulary Service which MUST be provided throughout the full opening hours.

Please keep this memo somewhere accessible for all pharmacy staff

As a pharmacy providing the Palliative Care Formulary service we have agreed to keep and MAINTAIN a stock of a locally agreed list of medicines so that users of the service have prompt access to these medicines in response to an NHS prescription (refer to the formulary on the Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire website). Patients at the end of life with COVID-19 deteriorate rapidly and are likely to require EoL drugs within a very short time frame (1-2 hours).

Presentation of a prescription for an End of Life Drug

- Dispense following SOP
- Reorder medication ensuring that the stock levels meet the requirements of the Palliative Care Formulary Service

If you are **unable to dispense a prescription** for a palliative care medicine because you do not have the stock you must:

- Check the urgency of the prescription – is it needed immediately? Can it wait until your next delivery? Can you get it from the wholesaler in time?
- **If the medication is not urgently needed** – Order from wholesaler. Order enough to fulfil the prescription AND to replenish the stock back to the required amount. Check expected delivery time and that is within the timescales required. Confirm this with the patient’s representative.
- **If the medication is needed immediately or before the next wholesaler delivery** - has another pharmacy got the item(s) in stock? Contact another palliative care pharmacy- a list of palliative care pharmacies has been provided. Other pharmacies may also hold stocks- you need to determine the time taken to contact local pharmacies against the likelihood of them having stocks when deciding which pharmacy to contact first.
- Locate a pharmacy with enough stock and ask that they reserve this stock before re-directing the prescription to them.
- If no stock can be located contact the prescriber to discuss a suitable alternative.
- Place an order with the wholesaler to bring stocks up to meet the requirements of the palliative care formulary service.
- Notify NHSE&I if unable to supply via the incident reporting function within the palliative care service on PharmOutcomes. This must be reported within 2 working days of the incident.

When contacted by a prescriber regarding an urgent item:

Prescribers have been reminded that they should contact a pharmacy to notify them when an urgent prescription has been issued to allow the pharmacy to find the prescription on the spine. If contacted by a prescriber about an urgent prescription the pharmacy should confirm:

- The urgency of the prescription.
- What items have been prescribed (so an immediate check on stock can be made to inform the GP if any items are not currently in stock).
 - If the item(s) are not in stock the pharmacy should discuss if the best course of action for the patient is to send the items to an alternative pharmacy (confirming first the items are in stock).
- How many items have been issued (to ensure that all relevant prescriptions are downloaded).
- Who will be collecting the prescription (and if it is possible for them to by-pass any queuing system which may be in operation by the pharmacy).

Remember - as a palliative care pharmacy you have made a commitment to ensure that users of the service have prompt access to these medicines